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22 APR 1983

OC M83-317

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Career Management Staff, DDA

FROM: William F. Donnelly [redacted]  
Director of Communications

SUBJECT: Review of Comparative Evaluation Descriptors [redacted]

REFERENCE: Memo from Acting Chief, CMS, DDA, dated  
21 March 1983, Same Subject

1. Attached you will find written responses to the questions posed in the reference. The responses represent our initial thoughts. We do believe it's a good time for the Agency to rethink the evaluation categories and their use. We are particularly concerned with Category III, and the lumping together of employees who may have the potential to advance with those who clearly do not. We also believe there should be an undefined category for new employees or those new to a position or component and for whom there has been insufficient time to make a good judgement on their potential. Under the present system, panels and boards force this type of employee into a category based entirely on expectations. [redacted]

2. Further input can be provided as required. We're very interested in actively participating in the ongoing evolution of the Agency's personnel evaluation system. Contact [redacted] Chief, OC-HRMD, for more information. [redacted]

Donnelly [redacted]

Attachment:  
As Stated

WARNING NOTICE  
INTELLIGENCE SOURCES  
AND METHODS INVOLVED

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Responses to Questions on Comparative Evaluation Descriptors  
(Keyed to Attachment to D/OP Memo dated 14 March 1983)

A. Judgements are made on potential from a review of each employee's level of performance, experience, education and training. The characteristics that OC evaluation boards specifically look for in determining potential or the lack of it at a given time are:

- (1) Performance level
- (2) Experience (substantive and managerial)
- (3) Initiative
- (4) Ability to communicate effectively
- (5) Personal attributes
- (6) Capacity for professional growth
- (7) Willingness to meet the assignment needs of the Career Service subgroup (Mobility)
- (8) Willingness to accept greater responsibility
- (9) Judgement

B. Most OC boards assign potential ratings based on projected ability for increased managerial responsibilities. However, in the engineering and computer science fields, potential may be assigned on increased substantive responsibilities. This could be true in the case of an employee who is not suitable for a management position because of lack of personal desire or the lack of skill in this area.

C. "Fast Trackers" and prospective managers are usually identified by their current performance level, substantive experience, initiative, assignment mobility, oral and written communication abilities, personal attributes, and interpersonal skills.

D. Yes, we believe a separate list of factors for panel use in determining potential would be helpful.

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E. No, we believe the current categories are adequate for identification of prospective managers and those employees requiring remedial actions.

F. "Demonstrated potential" means that an employee has in his or her current assignment shown the ability to assume greater responsibilities.

G. The Category III description appears to be contradictory. It indicates employees who are "close to realizing or have realized their potential." Then it goes on to say, "may be capable of performing successfully at a higher level of responsibility..." This lumps those who may have potential with those who clearly do not with the only commonality being "valuable contribution." In our minds it would be better to put those who may have potential in Category II and reserve Category III for those who are not expected to advance further.

H. The highest and lowest (I and IV) should require specific actions to develop the former and resolve the problems of the latter.

I. Determining "value" is subjective and can vary considerably over a period of time. Added to this it can reflect factors outside the control of the employee and management, and was originally intended for surplus exercises. For this reason, we believe consideration should be given to making "value" a separate function and kept apart from the category descriptors.

J. We suggest an undefined category be created for new employees or those new to a particular job or component where there has been insufficient time to determine the employee's potential and overall value. The concern is to avoid forcing an employee into a "regular" category based entirely on expectations.

K. In OC, separate evaluation boards meet to consider each occupational skill, and this is, therefore, not a problem for us.

L. Personal history as used in the evaluation process should include all those personal attributes, work experiences and documented performance contributions that are relevant to the employee's current position and projected development.

M. Categories should be more precise so that any vagueness can be diminished, recognizing that any system developed will be subjective and contain ambiguities.

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